



NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE

**Marvin S. Fertel**

VICE PRESIDENT,  
NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE  
SUPPORT & INTERNATIONAL  
PROGRAMS

September 12, 1997

Ms. Sharon J. Long  
U.S. Department of Energy, RW-44  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Subject: Comments Submitted for the Public Record Regarding  
DOE's Transportation Stakeholder Workshops and  
Future Public Outreach and Meetings.

Dear Ms. Long:

The Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI),<sup>1</sup> on behalf of the nuclear energy industry, is submitting these comments to the Department of Energy (DOE) on the agency's current public outreach activities and stakeholder involvement in the civilian radioactive waste management program.

Over the past 10 years DOE has hosted or participated in more than 170 public meetings to solicit public input on the subject of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) and high-level radioactive waste (HLW) storage, transportation, and disposal. The nuclear industry commends DOE for what surely is an unprecedented outreach to the general public by a federal agency. As a result of this extensive public outreach DOE now has a clear record of stakeholder viewpoints on this program.

More importantly, the impeccable record on safe transportation of spent nuclear fuel during the past 30 years is an indisputable indicator that current regulations ensure the safe transportation of SNF and HLW. Current federal regulations meet or exceed all international transportation regulations, and international shipments of radioactive materials have been ongoing in

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<sup>1</sup> NEI is the organization responsible for establishing unified nuclear industry policy on matters affecting the nuclear energy industry. NEI's members include all utilities licensed to operate commercial nuclear power plants in the United States, nuclear plant designers, major architect/engineering firms, fuel fabrication facilities, nuclear material licensees, and other organizations and individuals involved in the nuclear energy industry.



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numbers comparable to those that will be achieved in this program. DOE plans and actions should recognize that SNF transportation has been conducted safely both in the United States and worldwide.

As pointed out by many stakeholders at the recent DOE workshops in Dallas, Texas and Reston, Virginia, the current regulations promote a safe framework for spent nuclear fuel transportation, and the nuclear industry fully endorses their implementation. Changes to the current safe regulatory framework can only be made through legislation and/or rulemaking by those agencies that regulate SNF and HLW transportation—the Nuclear Regulatory Commission or the Department of Transportation. Additional requirements beyond those contained in the applicable statutes or regulations should be considered by DOE for this program only if they provide a clear benefit commensurate with their cost without compromising safety or security.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marvin S. Fertel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marvin" being more prominent than the last name "Fertel".

Marvin S. Fertel

c: Mr. Lake H. Barrett, OCRWM  
Mr. Dwight E. Shelor, OCRWM